

Equality Impact Assessment

Draft Education Commissioning Strategy ~ 2021 - 2024

Please add content where << XXX >> is indicated.

Please make Yes or No bold as appropriate.

Service area: Strategic Planning & Governance, People & Communities Directorate

Does the topic of this assessment link

to a budget reduction proposal: No – There are no direct financial implications as a result of the creation of the plan.

Equality impact assessment owner: Sally Varley

Assistant Director/Director sign off: <<Text here>>

Review date: July 2021

1. Equality Impacts

Please make High, Medium or Low bold as appropriate

Service User Impact

Before mitigating actions	High	Medium	Low
After mitigating actions	High	Medium	Low

Staff Impact

Before mitigating actions	High	Medium	Low
After mitigating actions	High	Medium	Low

2. The Proposal

2.1 Background to proposal

(Please provide a brief explanation of the project/proposals. You should consider the impact on both customers and staff)

Whilst there is no legal duty for LAs to have a school place planning plan, the *Education Provision in North Somerset ~ A Commissioning Strategy* provides the underpinning principles and procedures the Council will follow when working with schools and other partners to secure enough school places for its residents. It provides a strategic overview of school place needs in North Somerset as part of the Council's wider role to provide leadership of education and economic development and to be the local 'Children's Champion'. It is a Local Authority Plan that builds on the principles outlined in North Somerset's Corporate Plan 2020 -2024 - https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-03/Corporate%20Plan%202020-2024_0.pdf and previous Education Commissioning Strategies - <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-03/education%20provision%20in%20North%20Somerset%20-%20a%20commissioning%20strategy.pdf>

The Council's agreed Education Provision in North Somerset ~ A Commissioning Strategy is the policy base for any local decisions and covers a three-year period. The current plan expires in August 2021. The Council is consulting on an updated draft plan to cover the period 2021 – 2024.

There are no direct financial implications as a result of the creation of the plan. The delivery of new school places is, however, dependent on the provision of sufficient land and capital allocations appropriate to new place needs. Securing new school sites of sufficient size for a proposed new school and clear of physical constraints is complex.

The capital funds needed to progress all schemes contained within the commissioning strategy are not always in place. Officers continue to work to secure capital allocations from developers and through external funding sources as available.

Capital allocations come to the Council from a range of sources including: Basic Need; s106 contributions/Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Free School Bids. The Department for Education (DfE) may also allocate bespoke funding for priority areas as national priorities dictate.

Basic Need Capital Allocations between 2011/12 – 2019/20 have totalled £63,268,316. The DfE Scorecards - <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-school-places-scorecards-2018> provide a national and local snapshot of school places and the progress council's make towards ensuring there are sufficient at least good school places in each local authority areas across England.

Schools core revenue funding is distributed through the national Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), which is split into 4 blocks: the schools block, the high needs block, the early years block and the central services block. There are restrictions about how much funding can be moved from the Schools Block, and the Department for Education has recently restricted North Somerset's movement from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block to c. £650k (or 0.5% of the Schools Block for 2020/21).

Funding for maintained special schools comes from the High Needs Block of the DSG. This funding stream is experiencing unprecedented levels of increasing demand, driven by significant increases in the number of children with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) who require specialist provision.

2.2 Please detail below how this proposal may impact on any other organisation and their customers

Across North Somerset there are 78 schools, 61 of which are academies and therefore independent of the Council. The academies are currently mainly overseen by 11 Multi-Academy Trusts, with a partnership with a new MAT formally starting by September 2023 at the latest. There are also 2 Single Academies, 3 Voluntary Aided Catholic Primary school (linked to the Diocese of Clifton) and three Voluntary Controlled and two Voluntary Aided C of E Primary schools (affiliated to the Diocese of Bath & Wells). We have a close relationship with Weston College.

The Council works with the following stakeholders who all have an interest in the provision of school places locally:

- Pupils
- Existing and potential parents
- Diocesan partners
- Police
- Key health partners
- Youth Networks
- Local residents
- Trust bodies
- Free School promoters
- Regional Schools' Commissioner
- Springboard Opportunities Group
- North Somerset Parent Carers Working Together

- Early Years Providers
- Businesses
- Community Partnership Groups
- Governors
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Other Admission Authorities
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- Education Funding and Skills Agency (EFSA) and FA and Department for Education (DfE)
- Academies and academy trusts
- School Youth Councils

Section 3 – What Do We Know?

3.1 Customer/staff profile details – what data or evidence is there which tells us who is, or could be, affected?

The groups affected by the changes are existing and new schools/educational institutions, school partners (Diocese of Bath & Wells, Diocese of Clifton, Methodist Partnership) and pupil's and parents.

3.2 What does the data or evidence tell us about the potential impact on diverse groups, and how is this supported by historic experience/data?

The purpose of the plan is to secure enough school places. This normally involves the Council in increasing provision. In some cases, new provision in one area can have, due to competition, a detrimental impact on school demand in another area.

3.3 Are there any gaps in the data, for example across protected characteristics where information is limited or not available?

No

3.4 How have we involved or considered the views of the people that could be affected?

We will add equality questions to our consultation so any concerns can be raised.

3.5 What has this told us?

To be updated after the consultation has ended.

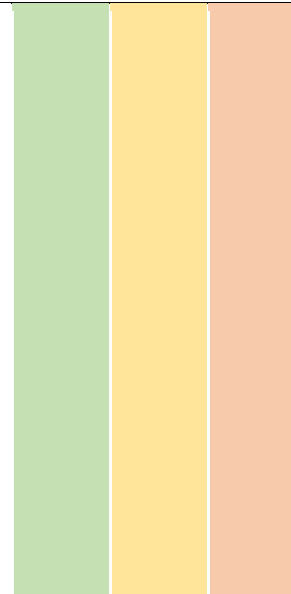
3.6 Are there any gaps in our consultation, what are our plans for the future?

To be updated after the consultation has ended.

Other specific impacts, for example: carers, parents, impact on health and wellbeing, Armed Forces Community etc.

X

Please specify:



Parents and carers who are seeking place for the children they are responsible for.

Some parents and carers of children with SEND will benefit from a school place within North Somerset rather than at a school outside the area as this strategy includes a greater emphasis on the provision of local SEND places than previous plans.

We hope that the ability to offer a local school place within North Somerset will outweigh any disadvantages for any who may be affected

Insert X into one box per row, for impact level and type.

H = High, M = Medium, L = Low, N = None | + = Positive, = = Neutral, - = Negative

Does this proposal have any potential Human Rights implications?

Yes **No**

If 'yes', please describe

<<Text here>>

Could this proposal have a Cumulative Impact with any other budget savings?

Yes **No**

This is an impact that appears when you consider services or activities together; a change or activity in one area may create an additional impact somewhere else

If 'yes', please describe?

<<Text here>>

Section 5 – Action Plan

Where you have listed that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.

Action taken/to be taken	How will it be monitored?
The plan may be updated after consultation once responses to equality issues are known.	This assessment will be reviewed at key stages of the project – after the initial consultation; after implementation (if approved).

If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.

<<Text>>